

OPEN DOOR

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2025



Members of the tenant scrutiny panel with Cllr Simon Myers - see inside on page 3 to find out what they asked him.

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Be an involved tenant!

Are you a tenant or leaseholder who wants to help shape the future of housing services?

The Tenant Voice Forum is your chance to get involved and make a difference. It's open to all tenants and leaseholders and provides a platform for you to share your views, help review policies and procedures and contribute to housing service improvements. As a member of the Tenant

Voice Forum, you will be invited to the Tenant Voice Panel meetings and other opportunities throughout the year. You can take part in person or online.

The tenant editorial panel is also open to all tenants and leaseholders - would you like to be involved in creating this newsletter? The panel co-creates articles and competitions as well as helping to agree content and design.

If you would like to be involved please email myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk

Have your say about the proposed new tenancy agreement and proposed changes to the tenancy policy. You should have received a letter asking you to fill in a survey. The survey is about a new tenancy agreement and changes to the tenancy policy. You can fill it in here northyorks.gov.uk/tenancy-consultations. It's important that you read about these changes and complete the survey before 31 December 2025. If you have any questions, email myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk

**Tell us
what you
think!**

Do you need this newsletter in large print or another language?

Please contact myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk
This newsletter is also available online at
northyorks.gov.uk/tenantinvolvement

Welcome from Carl, Head of Housing Management and Landlord Services

Welcome to the Winter edition of Open Door Magazine! As the year draws to a close and Christmas approaches, we hope this edition brings you some festive cheer.

I lead the team responsible for making sure council homes are well-managed and you feel supported. My service focuses on tenancy management and making sure homes meet high standards when tenants move in. We work closely with other housing teams to improve services, listen to your feedback, and ensure everyone is treated fairly and with respect.

Some of you may have heard that there have been fires in some properties this year. Thankfully, no-one was seriously hurt, but the impact has been deeply upsetting for those affected.

One fire damaged several homes, and sadly, a number of tenants had to leave their properties. This has been a very difficult and unsettling experience for them. Not only did some people lose their homes, but they also lost personal belongings that weren't insured.

This is a reminder of how important it is to have contents

insurance. It can help protect the things that matter to you if the worst happens.

Information about fire safety is included with this newsletter. It includes simple steps you can take to help keep yourself safe, especially over the holiday period when new electrical gadgets are popular gifts and the christmas lights are put up.

We work closely with North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue, who offer free safety checks. There's also information about contents insurance with Royal and Sun Alliance, which you can buy through the council if you wish. Your safety is our top priority and I hope that the information enclosed is helpful and reassuring.

I hope everyone enjoys a safe and peaceful holiday season and all good wishes for 2026.

*All the best,
Carl*



Tenant Satisfaction Measures – latest from our quarterly surveys

We carry out surveys every three months to understand how satisfied you are with our services.

The surveys are carried out by an independent market research company called Acuity, who recently spoke to 150 tenants.

Here's what you told us:

Overall satisfaction: About seven in ten tenants (71%) are happy with the service from the Council. This is a little lower than last time, but still shows most people are satisfied.

Safety and maintenance: Most tenants (78%) feel their home is safe, and 71% say their home is well maintained. However, some people have had problems with repairs taking too long or not being finished properly.

Repairs: 66% were satisfied with repairs done in the last year, but this has dropped compared to earlier surveys. Many tenants want repairs to be done more quickly and for the council to keep them better informed.

Neighbourhood: 60% are happy with how the council looks after neighbourhoods, but some would like to see more done about issues like litter, overgrown grass, and anti-social behaviour.

Communication: 76% feel well informed, and 75% feel treated fairly and with respect. However, some tenants find it hard to get through to the right person or get updates on their issues.

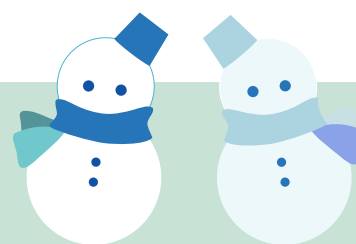
Damp and mould: Over a third (35%) of tenants say they have damp or mould in their homes. If you have this problem, it's important to let us know so we can help. You can report it online at northyorks.gov.uk/housingdamp or please see the back cover for the phone number.

Cost of living: Many tenants are worried about the cost of living. The council may be able to help with advice on benefits or budgeting - See the article 'Your guide to support with the cost of living' on page 7.

In summary: Most tenants are satisfied, but there are areas for improvement, especially around repairs, communication, and tackling damp. If you have concerns, please contact us - we want to hear from you and help where we can.

Thank you for taking part - it is really important in helping us improve our services.

You can read the full report on the website here northyorks.gov.uk/tenantinvolvement



The scrutiny panel meets Councillor Simon Myers

Councillor Simon Myers is the Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing. In October, he joined a group of tenants who check and improve housing services, called our tenant scrutiny panel, to chat with them and answer questions.

What's a typical day like for Cllr Myers?

He starts early—around 5am—with a walk for his four dogs, including two cheeky Jack Russells who don't get along with sheep!

Once work begins, it's straight into emails and online meetings. These cover everything from council housing and private landlords to leisure centres, libraries, and arts funding. He works closely with housing teams, the Regulator for Social Housing, and council officers to sort out tenant issues and improve services.

He also visits sites across North Yorkshire, supports arts and culture projects, and attends parish council meetings in the evenings. It's a busy job that mixes planning, people, and passion.

How does this role compare to his previous one?

Cllr Myers used to be Deputy Leader at Craven District Council. He told the panel this job is much busier and more public-facing.

He said: "I didn't set out to be a politician, I was asked to help, and 15 years later, I'm still doing it." He balances council work with personal responsibilities and running a small business. It's not easy, but he believes in doing the job properly or not at all.

He also said his portfolio—housing, leisure, libraries, and the arts—covers "the things that really matter to people." It's a role with challenges, but also real chances to make a difference.

What's the hardest part of the job?

Cllr Myers didn't hesitate: it's the driving. Long trips for early meetings can be tiring. He prefers public transport, but it's not always practical, especially when it involves several changes.

Another frustration is delays—especially in housing. Whether it's waiting on developers or dealing with empty properties, things often move slower than needed. "The need for housing is now," he said, stressing the urgency of getting homes ready for local people.

Housing priorities for North Yorkshire

North Yorkshire is a lovely place to live, but, like many areas, it has some serious housing problems. Cllr Myers shared the council's top priorities:

Tackling hidden deprivation

In some areas people don't have the basics they need. In Harrogate, life expectancy can differ by up to eight years between neighbouring areas. Better housing is key to fixing this.

Making housing truly affordable

House prices, second homes, and holiday lets have pushed up rents. Even "affordable rent" (80% of market rent) is still too high for many. The council is working to offer more social rent options.

Supporting younger people

Low wages and high housing costs mean young people are leaving. This affects local services like care and hospitality. We need homes that help them stay and build a life here.

Caring for older residents

North Yorkshire has a large older population. Adult social care is the council's biggest cost. More suitable housing is needed so older people can downsize without leaving their communities.

Investing in new homes

The council is putting £500 million into upgrading existing council homes and delivering 500 new ones over the next few years.

In addition, we have introduced a Council Tax Premium on second homes in the county. We are committed to spending 100% of this, which we estimate to be £42 million over 4 years, to aid the delivery of 720 new homes through our partners (such as Housing Associations).

This will include specialist supported housing, homes for care leavers and rural homes, as well as more homes available at social rent.

We believe North Yorkshire is the only council in England to be using this additional Council Tax in this way.



In and around Masham

This month our local area spotlight looks at one of our more rural locations, which is home to Maple Creek sheltered housing scheme.

Nestled in the heart of Wensleydale, the charming market town of Masham offers a delightful blend of history, community spirit, and natural beauty. With its wide Georgian market square—the largest in Yorkshire—Masham has been a hub of local life for centuries. Market days, held on Wednesdays and Saturdays, continue to draw visitors and locals alike, offering everything from fresh produce to handcrafted goods.

For those who appreciate tradition, Masham is home to two renowned breweries: Theakston and Black Sheep. Both offer tours and tastings, celebrating the town's proud brewing heritage. The nearby St Mary's Church, with its roots in the 7th century, provides a peaceful spot for reflection and a glimpse into the town's spiritual past. Nature lovers will enjoy gentle walks along the River Ure or through the surrounding countryside. The town also hosts regular events, including the popular Masham Sheep Fair, which honours its agricultural legacy.

Masham's friendly atmosphere, accessible services, and rich history make it a perfect place for residents and visitors alike.



Spot the difference

Can you spot the differences between the festive scenes below?



Newsflash! Change of drainage contractor for Drainage services - NY Highways will be taking over this work with Butler Bros Environmental Solutions Ltd working as a sub-contractor for them for specialist work. As always, please ask for identification or call the customer services number on the back page if you are unsure about anyone asking for access to your property.

Your voice, your power: How the tenant scrutiny panel is driving real change

The tenant scrutiny panel is a group of tenants who check and improve housing services. They are working on a project to look at how complaints are handled.

They will then recommend some things to a group of councillors called the Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which looks closely at what the council does as a social landlord.

The scrutiny panel gets involved in specific detailed projects, but, as we mentioned on the front cover, there are lots of other ways that you can get involved, even if it's just sending us your ideas for the newsletter!



Members of the tenant scrutiny panel (back row and right) with elected members Cllr Kevin Foster, Cllr Kirsty Poskitt and Cllr Jack Proud.

One of our involved tenants said "I have the opportunity to have a voice and meet different officers in the council. I've also found out how the council lets tenants have a voice on policies. Being an involved tenant can be really rewarding - not only from the point of view of having a say, but also socially, through making friends and working as a team.

As a tenant chair for the voice panel I get a chance to set agendas by asking officers from different parts of the council to attend, this makes sure the meetings are tenant led. Being involved with the council gives you great insight into the working roles of the officers. You get to know them through working with them, and it helps to make it easier for us to understand.

There are many different ways to be involved and have a voice - I have had the opportunity to chair and vice chair, plus help with the agenda for our meetings. We can also ask officers to give a reports in person and have the opportunity to ask questions. You can give your views on the different policies and strategies - it all helps working together and understanding your council housing."

If you would like to be involved please email us at myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk or call 01757 292230

Tenants take the lead at D'Arcy court clean-up day

In September, the tenant involvement team joined forces with colleagues across the council for a successful community clean-up day at D'Arcy Court in Selby.

This latest event was a shining example of teamwork across the council - several teams rolled up their sleeves to make a real difference:

- The Parks & Grounds team tackled overgrown areas and improved green spaces.
- Our contractor, Orbis, gave the communal stairwells and porch areas a much-needed deep clean.
- The Housing Standards repairs team replaced blown window panes and broken handles in all three blocks.



One resident said, "It's lovely to see everyone working together - it's made such a difference to where we live."

The recent clean-up day wasn't just a one-off event - it came about due to our ongoing Grounds Maintenance policy review.

A group of council members and tenants worked together on this project. They visited the sites to see the problems for themselves and help make the plan.

What makes this group stand out is the real impact it's had. For the first time, this group has directly influenced action that tenants can see and feel.

Local member Cllr Jack Proud and Tim Allison from the Parks and Grounds team were inspired by the group's findings They led the charge to organise the clean-up day and worked together to drive the action plan forward.

Adrian, one of the tenants who has been part of the group shared that seeing the areas first-hand gave them a real sense of purpose— he said "We knew we were making a difference. This is a really good example of how all of us working together can lead to visible improvements in our communities."

A huge thank you to everyone involved!

Wellness for everyone: Ways to stay healthy and happy

We've been talking to some of our tenants about how they look after their mental and physical health by socialising and trying to stay active, which is even more important at this time of year when nights are darker and it's easier to feel isolated.

Stay active, stay well – with Active North Yorkshire!

If you are looking to boost your health and wellbeing in a friendly, welcoming environment, Active North Yorkshire offers a wide range of activities designed with you in mind.

Whether you're in Hambleton, Harrogate, Knaresborough, Richmond, Ripon, Selby, or Tadcaster, our venues are the perfect place to get moving, meet others and feel great. From gentle gym sessions and swimming to lifestyle classes and tailored support, there's something for everyone – no matter your ability or experience.

Take Stockwell Community Hub in Knaresborough - Teresa, one of our involved tenants, recently visited and was impressed by the variety of classes. Healthy You and Functional Fitness are designed to keep you motivated. Functional Fitness is offered seated – ideal if you have mobility concerns – and instructors adapt exercises to suit your needs.

Our supportive team understands that everyone's journey is different. You'll never feel judged – just encouraged. Staff are always happy to guide you to the right resources and help you set achievable goals.

We also offer a Falls Prevention Programme - it's a safe, structured way to build strength and balance, with one-to-one chats to tailor your experience.

So why not give it a go? Visit northyorks.gov.uk/active-north-yorkshire/venues to find your nearest venue and take the first step to feeling well today!



Look out for details of our Winter
Wellness drop-in sessions, taking
place in early 2026.

Falls prevention

Anyone can have a fall, but it's more likely if you're older or have mobility problems. Making changes to prevent falls can help you avoid injuries and keep your confidence and independence.

There are things you can do to reduce your risk of falls.

Do

- Stay active – physical activity guidelines for older adults recommend being active every day, and doing activities that improve strength and balance at least twice a week
- Wear shoes or slippers that fit well, do not slip off and have a good grip
- Wear a personal alarm, or carry a mobile phone with you
- Use a non-slip mat in the bath or shower
- Consider fitting safety rails on steps, and grab rails in the bathroom
- Consider using a walking aid
- Eat well and stay hydrated – not eating and drinking enough can make you feel lightheaded or faint
- Look after your bone health – eat foods containing calcium, and make sure you get enough vitamin D
- Have regular eye tests, and get your ears and hearing checked, as ear problems can affect your balance
- Speak to a GP or pharmacist if you think your medicines could be affecting your balance.

Don't

- Try to do tasks that you find difficult such as lifting or reaching – ask someone to help you
- Have too much clutter at home, or things you could trip on such as loose wires or rugs
- Drink too much alcohol.

Dance for physical and mental wellbeing

One of our tenants told us about a dance group she attends called 'Dancing for wellbeing' – find out more here dancingforwellbeing.org

Here's what she said: "We dance to music and can stand or sit - it helps me with my co-ordination and memory. We also do a sing-along with laughter and sometimes we use pom poms, scarves, trill sticks and ribbon in our dance movements. Afterwards we chatter over a cup of tea and we also have parties. I come away feeling uplifted - the hour takes you away from what is happening in your life outside, and I feel more ready to cope with things after the session."

Your guide to support with the cost of living

Worried about the cost of living? We can help you find the right support.

Lots of people are still worried about the cost of living, so you're not alone if you are too. There are local schemes and organisations in North Yorkshire which may be able to help or point you in the right direction if you're struggling to pay for food and other essentials.

You'll find information about emergency support with everyday living costs, benefits, energy bills, food, schemes to help families, Pension Credit, free adult learning courses and managing your debt all in one place at northyorks.gov.uk/costofliving

If you're not sure who to turn to, you can call our customer service centre on **0300 131 2 131** Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 5pm, Wednesday 9:30am to 5pm and Friday 9am to 4:30pm. Ask for 'cost of living help' when prompted.



Winter home tips to keep you safe, warm and worry-free

As the colder months settle in, it's natural to want your home to feel cosy, safe and well looked after. Now that December is here, we are sharing a few simple steps to help make winter a little easier for everyone. Start by checking your heating system. Bleeding your radiators can help them run more efficiently – you'll find easy instructions here: northyorks.gov.uk/check-your-heating

It's also important to keep an eye out for damp and mould. Since Awaab's Law came into effect on 27 October, any reports of damp and mould must be investigated within 10 working days. Moisture from cooking, bathing and drying clothes indoors can lead to condensation – the main cause of damp and mould. To help prevent this, try to keep your home warm (see the article above if you are struggling with heating bills), ventilate rooms regularly, use extractor fans, and avoid drying clothes directly on radiators. If you notice condensation on windows or doors, please wipe it away to stop mould forming.

Over 130 tenants have already used our online form to report damp and mould this year. If you spot any signs, please don't wait – use the online form to report it straight away - northyorks.gov.uk/housingdamp or call the number on the back page. We're here to help you stay safe and comfortable this winter. If you need support or advice, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Report it as soon as you spot it.



We're here to help – our promise to support tenants affected by domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, and we want you to know that help is available.

North Yorkshire Council has joined the Make a Stand campaign by the Chartered Institute of Housing, which means we're taking extra steps to support people who may be affected.

We understand that having a safe and affordable home is vital – and that it can be hard to leave an abusive situation without one. That's why we've made four important promises:

- We have a clear policy to support tenants who are affected by domestic abuse.
- We make sure information is easy to find – on our website and in other places – so you know where to get help.
- We also support our staff who may be going through domestic abuse.
- We've appointed a senior champion to lead our work and make sure we're doing all we can.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, please don't suffer in silence. You're not alone, and there are people who care and want to help.

You can find support and more information at northyorks.gov.uk/housing-domestic-abuse



Show off your photography skills and win!

We've loved seeing the amazing entries in our Autumn photo competition – thank you to everyone who has already taken part!

To make things even more exciting, we're extending the competition over the holiday season. This is your chance to capture stunning winter scenes and showcase the beauty of your towns and villages.

What's in it for you? **A £20 shopping voucher could be yours!**

The new closing date for entries is 31 January 2026. Here's how to enter:

Simply email your photo to myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk or send a print out with your name, telephone number or email address on the back in an envelope to Tenant photo competition, Freepost Plus RTKB-GCTZ-JRSR, Document Management Service, North Yorkshire Council, County Hall, Racecourse Lane, Northallerton, DL7 8AL.

You don't need to use a stamp. Deadline for entries is **31 January 2026**. Please include a short description of your photo.

Let's celebrate the places we call home – we can't wait to see your entries! The winning pictures will be chosen by our tenant led scrutiny panel and published in the Spring 2026 edition of Open Door.

Privacy Notice

North Yorkshire Council is a 'Data Controller' as defined by Article 4(7) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). We are collecting information for entry into a short term competition to win one of 3 prizes. By submitting your contact details alongside your competition entry, you are providing consent under GDPR Article 6(1)(a) Consent to be contacted by North Yorkshire Council if you have won the competition. We will retain the information collecting for one month after the closing date. If you would like to withdraw consent please contact: My Housing Voice, North Yorkshire Council, County Hall, Northallerton, DL78 AD, or by email to myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk

If you would like to contact the Council's Data Protection Officer, Veritau, the email address is infogov@northyorks.gov.uk

For more information about how the Council uses your data, including your privacy rights and the complaints process, go to northyorks.gov.uk/privacy-notices



Win a £20 shopping voucher!

Tried and tasty Christmas treats

Cheesy Crackers - gluten-free friendly

These cheesy crackers are easy on the purse, big on flavour, and perfect for sharing or nibbling with a cuppa while wrapping presents. With just a handful of ingredients, they're a cracking way to add a homemade touch to the season.

Makes: 40 crackers

Prep & bake time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

110g plain flour *(or gluten-free alternative)*
½ heaped tsp smoked paprika
¼ tsp cayenne powder
70g unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
120g grated cheddar cheese
½ small egg, beaten



Method

1. Blitz the base: In a food processor, combine flour, paprika, cayenne, and butter. Pulse until it looks like fine breadcrumbs. (You can also rub the butter into the flour and spices until the fine breadcrumb stage).
2. Add the flavour: Toss in the cheese and mix in or blitz. Gradually add the beaten egg until the dough just comes together — you might not need all of it.
3. Roll & shape: Tip the dough onto a floured surface and form into a ball.
4. Divide into 2 portions and roll each to about 3mm thick. Keep dusting with flour and turning the dough to prevent it from sticking.
5. Cut & bake: Use a cookie cutter or knife to shape your crackers. Re-roll any scraps. Place on a non-stick tray.
6. Into the oven: Bake at 200°C (fan) / 370°F for 8–10 minutes until lightly golden and crisp. Keep an eye from 8 minutes — they brown quickly!

Rich bread and butter pudding alternative

Bake time: 30-40 minutes

Ingredients

270ml milk
70ml double cream
Rind of half a small lemon
50g caster sugar
3 eggs
1 stollen cake
10g candied orange or lemon
50g of currants
Freshly grated nutmeg

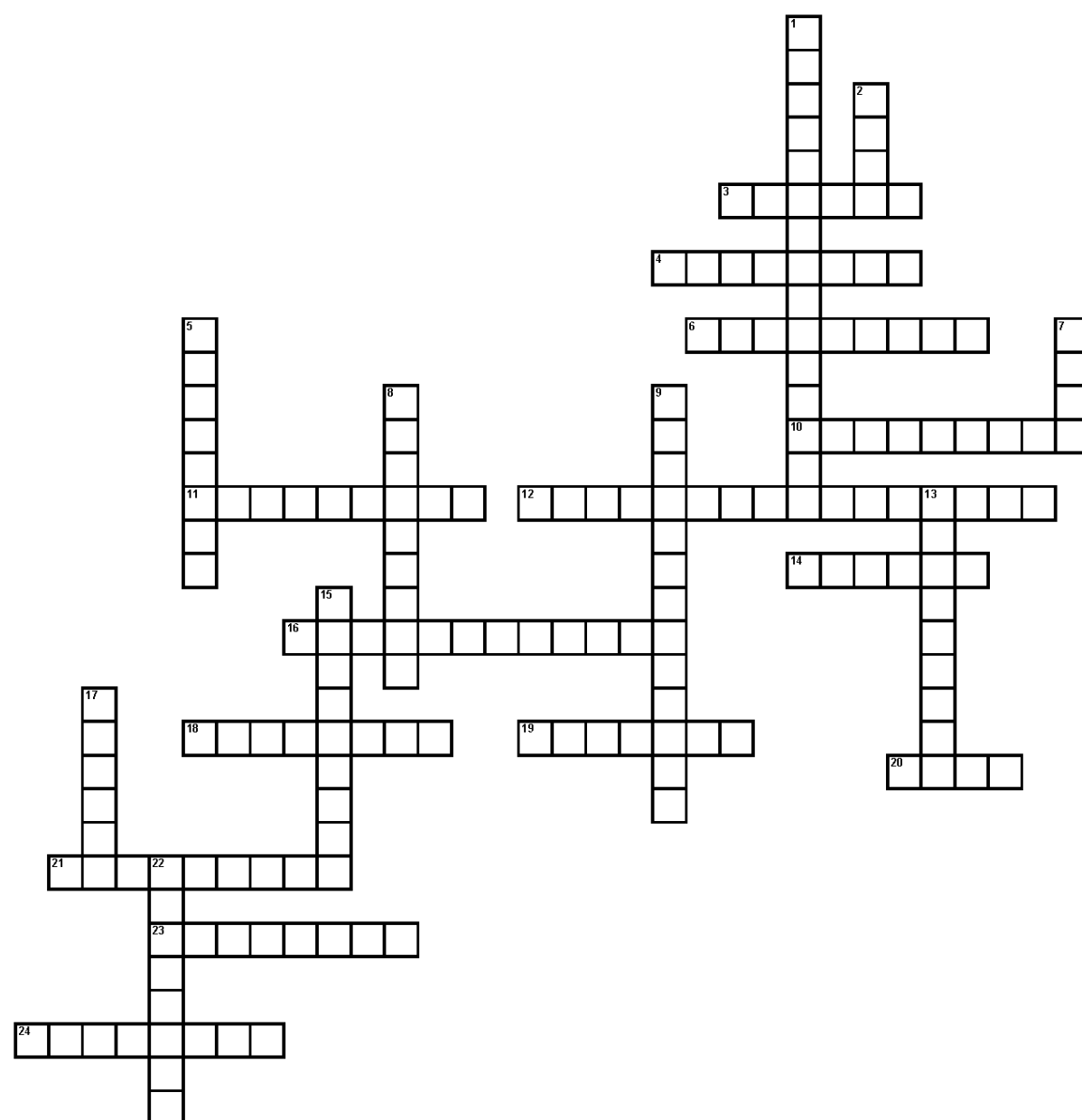


Method

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 4 or 350°F (180°C)
2. Butter a 2 pint/1 litre baking dish - oblong
3. Slice the stollen (not too thick), cut each slice in half
4. Arrange 1 layer of stollen over base of baking dish
5. Sprinkle candied peel and half currants over it
6. Cover with another layer of stollen and remainder of currants
7. In measuring jug, measure out 270ml of milk and 70ml of double cream, stir in caster sugar and lemon rind (can use ordinary sugar)
8. Whisk eggs, first on their own, then into the jug with wet ingredients
9. Pour this all over the stollen
10. Sprinkle with finely grated nutmeg
11. Bake in the oven for 30-40 minutes
12. Serve warm



Just for fun - Christmas themed crossword



Across

- [3] Traditional Christmas meat (6)
- [4] Popular Christmas carol: 'O Come, All Ye ___' (8)
- [6] Christmas song: 'Do They Know It's ___?' (9)
- [10] Decorative plant hung in doorways (9)
- [11] Popular Christmas stage show (9)
- [12] Traditional Christmas dessert made with dried fruit(9,7)
- [14] Christmas tradition: King's ___ (6)
- [16] Popular Christmas carol: 'Hark! The ___ Sing' (6, 6)
- [18] Sweet pastry filled with dried fruit, eaten at Christmas (5,3)
- [19] Popular Christmas song: 'Fairytale of ___' (3,4)
- [20] Christmas cracker contains this (4)
- [21] Christmas tradition: hanging ___ by the fire (9)
- [23] Popular Christmas film: 'Love ___' (8)
- [24] Christmas pudding often contains this coin (8)

Down

- [1] Santa's name (6, 9)
- [2] Christmas pantomime character, often comic (4)
- [5] Traditional Christmas cake topping (8)
- [7] Popular Christmas drink, often mulled (4)
- [8] Day after Christmas (6,3)
- [9] Popular Christmas Lunch vegetable in the UK (7, 6)
- [13] Christmas TV special often features this sci-fi show (6, 3)
- [15] Christmas carol: 'Good King ___' (9)
- [17] Leave this treat for Rudolf on Christmas Eve (6)
- [22] Christmas tradition of pulling these (8)

Stop! Charge safely: Fire risks from lithium-ion batteries

North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue service has highlighted charging batteries as a fire risk, specifically, lithium-ion batteries.

These batteries are found in many items that you use on a daily basis. They are used to power electronic toys, smartphones, laptops, e-scooters, and other devices such as e-cigarettes, toothbrushes, and even vehicles.

These batteries store a large amount of energy in a small space. If not used correctly or damaged, they can overheat, start intense fires, give off toxic gasses and explode.

There are a number of ways you can reduce the risk of fire in the home:

- Only buy devices from reputable retailers that are British Standard/CE tested and approved.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Do not use batteries in devices that they are not designed for.
- Always fit batteries in a device in the correct way.
- Only use the charger that came with the device/batteries and make sure the charging cable is in good condition (no exposed cables, kinks or fraying of out sheath).
- Do not charge a device under your pillow, on your bed or on soft furnishings.
- Keep batteries/devices at room temperature, away from direct sunlight, and from anything that can catch fire.
- Don't leave a device charging while unattended, overnight or when sleeping.
- Do not modify, redesign, dismantle or use batteries for anything other than the manufactured intention.

Stop using the device or battery immediately if:

- It gives off a burning odour, starts producing vapor/smoke or excessive heat
- There is any change in colour to the item, or it is leaking its contents.

What to do:

Move the device away from anything combustible if safe to do so and call 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service.

Do not touch if the item is smoking, visibly hot or has actually caught fire, serious injury could occur.

Get out, stay out, call the fire service out.

Please remember, never throw vapes or batteries in your bin. Recycle them safely instead.

Fires caused by vapes and other electrical items are also becoming an increasing concern for waste services across North Yorkshire. Since April 2025, there have already been three fires at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

The most frustrating part? They're completely avoidable.

If it has a plug or a battery, it can be recycled!

Most independent vape shops offer free recycling for used vapes.

All HWRCs across North Yorkshire have dedicated vape and small electrical recycling points.

Find your nearest recycling centre: **northyorks.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste/household-waste-recycling-centres/find-your-local-household-waste-recycling-centre**

Locate vape and battery recycling points near you: **recyclenow.com/about-us/recycling-locator-tool**

Please also read the information in the enclosed leaflet about fire safety in your home.



Damaged items from a recent council house fire in North Yorkshire

How to get in touch



Please recycle this newsletter when you have finished reading it.

Christmas and New Year 2025-26

Our in-person offices and customer access hubs are closed over the Christmas period from Thursday 25 December 2025 to Thursday 1 January 2026 inclusive.

Our customer service phone line will only be open for priority services, which include: • Social care • Housing repairs and homelessness • Registrars • Trading Standards • Highways • Faulty Ryecare lifeline equipment

If you need help with a priority service during the Christmas period call **0300 131 2 131** and select the correct option for the service you need. We will not be monitoring or responding to messages on social media during this time. Regular service will resume and customer access hubs will reopen at **9am on Friday 2 January 2026**.

The housing service will be open for emergency repairs over Christmas and New Year. Please call **0300 131 2 131**. Please report all other non-urgent repairs online where possible - **northyorks.gov.uk/housingrepair**

How to complain

You can make a complaint in the following ways:

by telephone – call our Customer Service Team on **0300 131 2 131** (please say 'housing' when prompted).

Online using the form here **northyorks.gov.uk/complaints**

In writing: North Yorkshire Council, County Hall, Northallerton North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD

In person: to North Yorkshire Council housing staff

Or, via a third party/representative.

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our complaints handling you can contact the Housing Ombudsman: **housing-ombudsman.org.uk** or call **0300 111 3000**

How to report repairs/damp and mould

You can report repairs to us in the following ways:

Online: **northyorks.gov.uk/housingrepair**

Do not use the online form to report an emergency repair.

By telephone: **0300 131 2 131**. Please say 'Housing repairs' when prompted.

Before you report a repair make sure that you have:

- Checked if the repair is your responsibility or the council's responsibility
- Gathered as much information as you can about the repair.

If you are reporting an emergency repair outside normal office hours, and during weekends and bank holidays you should use the same contact telephone number; **0300 131 2 131**, which will connect you to the emergency repair call handling team. Go to **northyorks.gov.uk/outofhours** for more information. Please see the above information about the Christmas period.

If you smell gas call the National Gas Network immediately on 0800 111 999 (minicom 0800 5875055).

If you have problems with damp and/or mould go to **northyorks.gov.uk/housingdamp** or phone **0300 131 2 131** and say 'condensation, damp and mould' when prompted.

Beware of 'No Win, No Fee' disrepair claims.

Individuals may pressure you to sign legal papers without explaining risks. We would advise:

- Don't sign anything at the door
- Report repairs or make a complaint directly to us

You can also contact the Housing Ombudsman on 0300 111 3000 or go to **housing-ombudsman.org.uk**

How to get involved

Go to **northyorks.gov.uk/housinginvolvement** to find out more. If you have a story that you would like to share, please email **myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk**

Would you be happy to get this newsletter on email? Let us know by emailing **myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk**